The Government has accorded priority for hydro development and has taken a number of steps and measures in this direction. Some are given below:

(A) Policy initiatives taken for increasing the hydro capacity

(i) Policy on Hydro power development.

(ii) National Water Policy

(iii) Electricity Act, 2003.

(iv) National Electricity Policy.

(v) National Rehabilitation (R&R) Policy.

(vi) Keeping in view the requirements of power projects in certain States including Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, the minimum capacity of inter-State thermal power plants to avail mega project benefits, has been reduced from 1000 MW to 700 MW in these States. The corresponding qualifying threshold capacity for inter-State hydro power plants located in these States, for availing mega benefits has been reduced from 500 MW to 350 MW.

(B) Other measures taken for increasing the hydro capacity

(i) Creation of Power Corporations and development of project in the North East by National Hydro Electric Power Corporation, NTPC Limited in addition to North Eastern Electric Power Corporation.

(ii) *Three stage clearance procedure*

(iii) Ranking study by CEA

(iv) 50,000 MW Hydroelectric Initiative and recent signing of MOU with Government of Arunachal Pradesh for development nearly 14000 MW.

Power capacity addition

4221. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have drawn a plan to add 70,000 MW of generation capacity during the next five years;

(b) if so, whether the plan will include transmission network expansion and a matching distribution augmentation;

(c) if so, the investment required for the expansion;

(d) whether any new ultra mega power projects are envisaged in Andhra Pradesh to realize the plan;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) The Working Group on Power for the Eleventh Plan submitted its report on 31.1.2007. Based on assumption of likely capacity addition of 30641 MW during the Tenth Plan, the Working Group has proposed a capacity of 68869 MW to be added during Eleventh Plan. Based on actual capacity addition of 21180 MW and upgrading of few units, the likely capacity to be added in Eleventh Plan works out to 78577 MW; transmission expansion plan matching with generation expansion plan has also been proposed in the report submitted by the Working Group.

Distribution network has to be developed by the distribution companies in their respective areas of supply to meet the load growth.

(c) The overall requirement of funds in the Eleventh Plan has been estimated by the Working Group at Rs. 10,31,600 crore which *inter-alia* include Rs. 4,10,896 crore towards generation projects, Rs. 1,40,000 crore towards transmission and Rs. 2,87,000 crore for distribution including rural electrification.

(d) to (f) One Ultra Mega Power Project (4000 MW) in Andhra Pradesh is envisaged at Krishnapatnam. Given the gestation period associated with the development of large size super critical projects, the benefits from this project have not been included in the Eleventh Plan generation capacity programme.

Increase in ceiling rate

4222. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission has proposed to increase the ceiling rate of the unscheduled interchange;